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Soviet Ties Daniloff to CIA Agent

Spokesman Charges Embassy Official Directed Reporter

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Washington Post Foreign Service

MOSCOW, Sept. 13—A Soviet spokesman today accused U.S. News & World Report correspondent Nicholas Daniloff of spying for a Moscow-based CIA agent, and said U.S. denials of the relationship were "attempts at misinforming world opinion."

Gennadi Gerasimov, spokesman for the Foreign Ministry, also said Soviet scientist Gennadi Zakharov, charged with spying in the United States, was the victim of an "act of provocation."

"As you can see, the cases are completely different," said Gerasimov at a briefing for foreign and Soviet correspondents.

Gerasimov named Murat Natirboff as the CIA agent who ostensibly gave Daniloff his instructions. The Soviet news agency Tass went further in a report on Gerasimov's briefing, identifying Natirboff as the Moscow CIA station chief. Natirboff served as a counsellor on regional affairs at the U.S. Embassy until this summer, when his normal two-year tour ended, an embassy spokesman said.

Gerasimov gave other details of the charges compiled against Daniloff, alleging that between 1982 and 1986, he collected information on the location of military units and military facilities. A "Citizen L." said that between 1982 and 1986, Daniloff persistently asked him about troops in Afghanistan. A "Citizen K." in Voronezh, a city south of Moscow, said Daniloff asked about military facilities and about places where radioactive waste is stored, including Kone in the Moscow area.

Asked later whether nuclear waste storage sites are secret in the Soviet Union, Gerasimov said, "Each country has its own rules. In this case, this is secret information."

Daniloff, released yesterday from a Soviet military prison and now living in the U.S. Embassy compound, issued a statement today in which he again asserted that he has had "no official or secret relationship with any intelligence agency."

"If you ask why I was arrested, I believe my arrest was carefully engineered to give the Soviet side some bargaining leverage in the case of Gennadi Zakharov in New York," Daniloff said in a statement read today by his wife Ruth.

Ruth Daniloff, who has moved into the embassy compound with her husband, said today he was "nervously and emotionally exhausted," and that he had lost weight during his 13 days in prison.

At his briefing, Gerasimov said Daniloff's release seemed to have fanned a new "fuss," which could harm any progress in the U.S.-Soviet relationship.

Gerasimov cited, in particular, comments by Secretary of State George P. Shultz that Daniloff's release from prison to the embassy still left him a "hostage," and that his situation impeded improved relations.

"This unacceptable position makes the U.S.-Soviet relationship hostage to the cause of a trivial spy," Gerasimov responded today.

Today's volley of words came as diplomats continued to try to untie the next knot in the cases of Zakharov and Daniloff.

The joint agreement to release the two to their respective embassies "does not mean that further diplomatic negotiations would not lead to a final resolution in this case, and other cases like it," Gerasimov said today.

One option, observers here speculate, is the release of Daniloff and a jailed Soviet dissident to the United States in return for the release of Zakharov to the Soviet Union. Such an arrangement was agreed to in 1978, when a U.S. businessman was held in Moscow after the arrest of two Soviet employes of the United Nations.

A straight trade of Daniloff for Zakharov has been ruled out by U.S. authorities and Daniloff himself, since they say it implies that both are spies.

By agreeing to yesterday's provisional release and by Gerasimov's comments today, the Soviets seemed to be signaling their eagerness to get the Daniloff case behind them—without backing off their charges.

A scheduled meeting on Friday and Saturday between Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze is a logical deadline for the negotiators, and some observers speculate that a resolution will be found in the next week.

Daniloff also appealed today for a lowering of the rhetoric around the case.

"I believe the time has come to cool it," he said. "Right now I am genuinely concerned that the furor might get out of hand and upset a process which is far more important than the details of my case, or the case of Mr. Zakharov."

He also refused to discuss the charges against him in detail, saying he would do so when he returns to the United States. Later today, he told a reporter that he did not want to "dignify" Gerasimov's specific charges with comment.

Gerasimov said that Daniloff had been acting "on instructions of Natirboff, a spy resident" at the U.S. Embassy.

Gerasimov today gave the first official comments on the Zakharov case, which was mentioned for the first time in the Soviet press yesterday with the announcement of the joint agreement.

According to Gerasimov, Zakharov, 39, was given an envelope containing defense material and then arrested. Gerasimov called the incident "an act of provocation on the part of the secret services," and said "the U.S. side until now has presented no real evidence showing the guilt of Zakharov."

Gerasimov today also said that Soviet geneticist David Goldfarb had refuted claims that Soviet authorities had tried to get him to compromise Daniloff two years ago.

At the earlier press conference, Ruth Daniloff, accompanied by U.S. News deputy managing editor Henry Trewhitt, said Daniloff's cellmate, a Moscow mathematician who was believed to be an informer, asked the American to carry out some documents when he left—"some mathematical formulas," Ruth Daniloff told reporters.

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Daniloff is expected to give a press conference on Sunday. He had promised one today, but "was not feeling up to it," Trewhitt said.

The Associated Press reported from Washington:

"Misha," the Soviet acquaintance who handed Daniloff a package immediately before his Aug. 30 arrest by the KGB, is Mikhail Anatolevich Luzin, Daniloff told Trewhitt, according to an account published yesterday by U.S. News.

Daniloff described Luzin as "a bright young man" in his mid-twenties and said he met him in Frunze in 1982, the magazine said. "I do not believe he was a KGB agent from the start, but I believe the KGB reached him after two or three years," Daniloff said.

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